



COOKEVILLE FIRST CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

From Your Minister

“Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” — Mark 2:16

When people describe Jesus' ministry, it never takes them long to say that “Jesus ate with sinners.” It was an important part of what Jesus did. In fact, he did it so often that people used it against him.

But I think we need to dig even deeper into that truth, because we need to see that Jesus did not just eat with one kind of person. Yes, he ate with tax collectors and sinners. But he also ate with his disciples. He fed enormous crowds of ordinary people. He accepted invitations to eat in the homes of Pharisees. He ate with people who were accepted and with people who were despised.

Some of those people would never have chosen to sit at the same table with each other. But Jesus sat with all of them. In Luke 7, Jesus eats in the home of a Pharisee named Simon when a woman described as a sinner enters and anoints Jesus' feet. While Simon makes judgments about her, Jesus sees her and welcomes her.

In Luke 19, Jesus invites himself to the home of Zacchaeus, a tax collector whom the crowd despises. Again, people complain that he is allowing himself to be the guest of one who is a sinner.

Jesus had a habit of eating with “the wrong people.” Or maybe everyone else just had too small an idea of who belonged at the table. In the Gospels, meals are about more than food. Who you welcomed to your table said something about who you considered worthy of your company. It showed who belonged and who didn't.

And Jesus kept making the table bigger. That doesn't mean Jesus pretended that people's lives didn't need to change. But again and again, people did not have to prove themselves worthy before Jesus welcomed them. They encountered Jesus at the table.

This Sunday, Christians around the world will celebrate World Communion Sunday. We will gather around the Lord's Table, at least in spirit, with people we will never meet, speaking languages we cannot understand, and worshiping in ways that are very different than our own.

It is the perfect time to remember that Jesus welcomed so many different people because he had a remarkably large table. As we think about that, the question should not be whether all of those different people belong at the table. Jesus certainly made room for them. Instead, the more challenging question we need to ask ourselves is whether we are willing to sit beside them.

565 E. 10th Street
Cookeville, TN 38501
931-526-6585
cookevillecpchurch.org

Staff

Rev. Christian Smith, Pastor

christian@cookevillecpchurch.org

Sandra Robbins, Music Director

sandra@cookevillecpchurch.org

Caleb Cashion, Director of

Discipleship and Family
Ministries

caleb@cookevillecpchurch.org

Kiana Gentry, Nursery

**Lexie Rolman, Children's
Ministry**

Joy Rachor, Organist

Are you new here? Do you have a prayer concern or idea to share? Do you want to be on our email list for the newsletter? Just scan the code below!



Coming Up This Week

Wednesday, September 30

- 5:15pm - Connection Dinner - no charge for meal
- 6:00pm - Children and Youth / Twisted Stitchers
- 6:15pm - Adult Study - Apocrypha: First Maccabees

Thursday, October 1

- 7:30am - Coffee with the Pastor - The Exceptional Bean
- 4:00pm - God's 4H-ers: His & Hers Healthy Workouts to Hymns

Sunday, October 4

- 8:45am - Sunday Worship
- 9:00am - Sunday Morning Small Groups
- 11:00am - Sunday Worship
- 5:30pm - Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
- 6:30pm - Youth and Young Adult Meeting

Monday, October 5

- 3:00pm - Mahjong
- 4:00pm - God's 4H-ers: His & Hers Healthy Workouts to Hymns

Tuesday, October 6

- 12:00pm - Men's Bible Study
- 1:00pm - Community Assistance



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

BY HAZEL OFFNER

TUESDAYS AT NOON
FOUNDATIONS CLASSROOM



BRING YOUR LUNCH



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
LORI VARNEY





Stories
WE THOUGHT
WE KNEW

Many Languages, One People

GENESIS 11:1–9
October 4, 2026



Sunday Worship Information

Sunday, October 4, is World Communion Sunday, and the chancel color will be green.

We continue our sermon series, “Stories We Thought We Knew,” as we return to familiar stories of Scripture and discover what they might have to teach us when we encounter them with fresh eyes.

Our Senior Minister, Rev. Christian Smith, will preach from Genesis 11:1–9, the story of the Tower of Babel, in a sermon titled “Many Languages, One People.”

As Christians around the world gather at Christ’s table, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion and remember that our differences in language, culture, and background do not have to divide us. In Christ, we are welcomed to one table and called to be one people.

We invite you to join us in the sanctuary at 8:45 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. If you are unable to attend in person, the 8:45 a.m. service will be streamed live on our church’s YouTube channel.

All are welcome as we worship with Christians around the world and gather at a table where Christ makes room for us all.



Other Opportunities



Save the Date: Trunk or Treat — Wednesday, October 28!

Join us for an evening of fall fun! We'll begin with a chili and soup cookoff at 5:30 p.m., followed by Trunk or Treat at 6:30 p.m., when we'll hand out candy and treats from our decorated cars and trucks.

Mark your calendar, invite your friends, and start thinking about your trunk decorations! More details will be coming in the next few weeks.

HELP NEEDED!

PACK Or DELIVER

NORTHEAST ELEMENTARY FOOD BAGS



Your time makes a difference
for local students and families.



If interested, see Jodi Smith.



Holy Land 2027 Trip

In September 2027, members of our church will join First United Methodist Church for a tour of the Holy Land. If you have ever dreamed of visiting many of the places where Jesus lived and ministered, we invite you to learn more about this exciting opportunity. You can also learn more by speaking with Christian and/or visiting the following link: <https://www.eo.travelwithus.com/tours/hl27091527p59093>

BEHIND THE BADGE

Community Conversation with FBI Nashville



**WEDNESDAY,
OCTOBER 7, 2026**



1:30 PM – 4:30 PM



Stevens Street Baptist Church,
327 W. Stevens St., Cookeville

EVENT SCHEDULE



1:30 PM – 2:30 PM – FBI NASHVILLE COMMUNITY AWARENESS PRESENTATION

Hear directly from FBI Nashville about the Bureau's mission, priorities, and how we work together to keep our communities safe.



2:45 PM – 3:30 PM – ELDER FRAUD & CYBER PRESENTATION

Learn how scammers target older adults and how to protect yourself and loved ones from financial exploitation and cyber threats.



3:30 PM – 4:30 PM – COOKEVILLE CITY POLICE

Open for questions and discussion.

TOPICS MAY INCLUDE

- Current Scams Targeting Our Community
- How Criminals Steal Your Personal Information
- Protecting Your Finances and Accounts
- Safe Online Practices
- Reporting Suspicious Activity
- Resources and Community Support

LEARN. CONNECT. PROTECT. ★

Sign up at www.fbinaa.org

Cumberland Presbyterian Nursery School Fundraiser

Our Nothing Bundt Cake Fundraiser is HERE!

When you purchase a Nothing Bundt Cake through our fundraiser, you get a delicious treat **AND** help support CPNS.

Why Cake?

Because fundraising should be delicious!

Your purchase helps us raise money for classrooms, activities, supplies, & special experiences for the children.

Important Date:

Orders are due September 30th, 2026

Please complete the attached order form and return it to CPNS by the deadline. No later orders will be accepted. Please let me know if you need extra order forms.

Thank you for supporting CPNS!

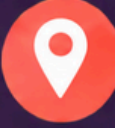
Every cake purchased makes a difference and helps us continue creating a fun and enriching environment for our children!

You can call or come by the church office -931-526-6585 - if you are interested in purchasing one or more bundt cakes for our daycare fundraiser. The cost per cake is \$7 and there are several flavors available. Help support the activities of our daycare! **Orders are due today!**



God's 4H-ers

His and Hers Healthy Workouts to Hymns

-  **Lower Commons**
-  **Mondays and Thursdays at 4:00 PM**
-  **FREE**
-  **Everyone is invited**

 **Cookeville First Cumberland Presbyterian Church**
A healthy community for body, mind and spirit

God's 4H-ers meets every Monday and Thursday at 4:00 PM in the Lower Commons. Join us for His and Hers Healthy Workouts to Hymns! The class is free, and everyone is invited to be part of a healthy community for body, mind, and spirit.

For Thursday's class, wear comfortable clothing and, if you have them, bring a set of hand weights. Three or five pounds is a good starting point. Bring heavier weights if you're used to lifting them. You don't need a mat yet. And don't worry if you arrive late or need to leave early. Come when you can!



THRIVE JUMP NIGHT

October 2

Children & youth invited!

Meet at church • 5:00 PM
Jump at Thrive, then pizza at church
Pickup at church • 8:00–8:30 PM

Parent or guardian: complete the online waiver before the event
thrivecookeville.com/waiver/
Questions? caleb@cookevillecpchurch.org

Bring a friend!

Stewardship Report

Sunday, September 27, 2026

Commitments - \$4,505.00 Undesignated - \$850.00 Other - \$338.00

This week's offering included an \$80.00 facilities usage donation, \$100.00 for t-shirts, and \$158.00 in Connection meal donations (09/16 and 09/23).

Total contributions - \$5,693.00



Giving is one of the ways we respond to the grace we have received in Jesus Christ. Although we do not pass the offering plates during worship, the ministry of this church continues because of your faithful generosity. Offering boxes are available beside the narthex credenza and by the "Amen Corner." Plates are also available on the table at the front of the sanctuary. You may also give electronically by scanning the QR code shown here. Thank you for supporting the mission and ministry of this congregation as we seek to love God and love our neighbors.

Prayer Concerns

Prayer Concerns:

- Maggie Wharton
- Dixon Zendt - surgery on both thumbs
- Kathie Chapman - surgery on broken leg and wrist
- Adam Wright - Jan Holloway Wright's stepson - construction accident
- Reggie Brown - surgery on broken leg
- Janet LaPoint - Evelyn Plecan's cousin
- Nancy Bunnell - Evelyn Plecan's cousin
- Allen Mackrill - Lataine Perry's brother - stroke
- Jason Lingerfelt - bypass surgery
- Lee Webb - Alzheimers
- Willene James - Freeman Smith's sister
- Ray Smith - Freeman Smith's brother
- Unspoken Requests

Cancer Treatment:

- Nancy Rector - breast cancer
- Bailee Brown - Caleb Cashion's sister
- Kristen Simon - Cindy Putz's niece
- Jim Dixon
- Robert Marbury - Jean Webb's brother
- Barbara Spurgeon - colon cancer
- Bill Snyder - Virginia Lovellette's brother
- Linda Stringer - Evon Maggart's sister
- Niki Work - Jodi Smith's cousin

Assisted Living:

- Doris Baggett - Signature Healthcare
- Roberta Ross - Standing Stone
- Ramona Tilghman - Life Care of Sparta
- Regina Weber - NHC



There is a lot happening at First Cumberland this fall. Who might enjoy being part of something you see in this week's Manna? Encouraging people and getting them involved often begins with the simple question, "Would you like to come with me?"